1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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"he who was born before me" and "he who was born after me" respectively. These terms do not, strictly speaking, convey any idea of consanguinity, although they are commonly used to refer to a brother or a sister. Exactly equivalent terms are found in all the languages, for example the *en-toaka-ya* and *ar-dot-ot* of *Akar-Bale*. I was not able to discover in *Aka-Jeru* nor yet in *Akar-Bale* any term to denote a brother or a sister. In *Aka-Bea*, however, Mr Man records the term *ar-weji-ya* or *ar-wejeri-ya*. The stem *-weji-* or *-wejeri-*, as we shall shortly see, is a verbal stem referring to the act of birth, *-ya* is a verbal suffix, and the prefix *ar-* conveys a reference to position in space or time. The whole word seems to mean "he or she who was born in the same womb as myself," and is therefore strictly a word meaning "brother or sister." It is possible that similar words exist in *Akar-Jeru* and *Akar-Bale*, but I never came across them.

Other terms descriptive of social status are the *Akar-Bale* terms *ab-ĉuga* and *ab-ĉupal* which refer to married men and women particularly those older than the speaker. These also are not properly terms of relationship, though a man may refer to some of his relatives as *d'ab-ĉuga*, adding the personal pronoun to what is properly a word descriptive of the social position of the person in question. In *Aka-Bea* the equivalent terms are *ab-ĉabil* and *ab-ĉana*. It would seem that the term *aka-kuam* (*aka-kam* in *Aka-Bea*) is of the same kind, being applicable by an older married man to a younger. At any rate I was unable to discover that it conveyed to the natives any notion of relationship.

There are a certain number of terms that are descriptive of definite relationships. In the North *ot-a-bui*, and in *Akar-Bale ab-i-ya* are both of them derived from verbal stems meaning "to marry" and are used to denote a husband or a wife. In the North I did not discover any term descriptive of a father or a mother save those derived from the terms of address. In *Akar-Bale* and *Aka-Bea* there are such terms; *ab-atr* in *Akar-Bale* means "father" while the word for "mother" was not noted; in *Aka-Bea* a father is *ar-odi-ya*, and a mother is *ab-et-ya*. These words are descriptive of the physiological relation between a

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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601 parent and a child. A man's adopted mother could not be his *ab-eti-ya*, for this term applies only to the woman from whose womb he issued. Similarly an adopted father or a step-father could not be *ab-atr* or *ar-odi-ya*. There are similar words for child, which also refer to the physiological relation of a child to its parent. In the North the stem *-tire* means "offspring." The offspring of a plant, that is the young shoots, are denoted by the term *era-tire*, the prefix *era-* serving to convey a reference to trees and plants. The offspring of an animal or of a human being is *e-tire*. The word *e-tire* means "the child of somebody" without reference to any particular person as the parent. In the form *ot-tire* the word means "his or her child" with reference to some person understood. A man or woman cannot in strict accuracy apply the term *ot-tire* to his adopted child, though I believe that it might be used in this loose sense at times. An adopted child is "he whom I have adopted" *t'oi-ĕclo-kom*. In *Akar-Bale* and *Aka-Bea* there are different terms for "child" according as the reference is to the child of a man or to that of a woman. Thus in *Akar-Bale* the child (in the physiological sense) of a father is *ar-kodire*, and the child of a mother is *ab-atet*. In *Aka-Bea* the physiological relation of a father and child is denoted by the verbal stem *-odi-*. This stem takes the prefix *ar-*. The word for father is formed by adding the verbal suffix *-ya* (*ar-odi-ya*). The word for child (father speaking) is formed by means of the verbal suffix *-re* or *-yate* (*ar-odi-re* or *ar-odi-yate*). We may translate *d'ar-odi-ya* as meaning "he who caused me to be conceived" while *d'ar-odi-re* or *d'ar-odi-yate* means "him whom I caused to be conceived." In the same language the physiological relation of a mother and a child is denoted by the stem *-eti-*. This stem takes the prefix *ab-*. A mother is *ab-eti-ya*, and the child of a mother is *ab-eti-re* or *ab-eti-yate*, the verbal suffixes being used in a way similar to that in the case of the terms for father and child. In *Aka-Bea* there is also a stem *-weji-* or *-wejeri-* which has exactly the same meaning as *-eti-* and can be substituted for it in the terms meaning mother and child, as *ab-weji-ya* = mother, *ab-weji-re* = child.

601 Other descriptive words used to denote specific relationships

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906–1908)1922
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and wife were the son and daughter of two brothers. Mr E. H. Man writes that "marriage is only permissible between those who are known to be not even distantly connected, except by wedlock, with each other; so inexorable, indeed is this rule, that it extends and applies equally to such as are related merely by the custom of adoption." He adds that marriage between first cousins is forbidden. I was not able to satisfy myself on this point, but it seemed to me that while such a marriage as that of first cousins was not actually regarded as wrong, and therefore forbidden, it was regarded as preferable that a man should marry a woman not so nearly related to him. No distinction is made between different kinds of cousin[1].

My observations did not confirm Mr Man's statement that persons related by adoption are forbidden to marry. It is necessary, however, to distinguish two different kinds of adoption. When the parents of a child of less than six or seven years of age die, the child is adopted into some other family. We may call this "orphan adoption." As will be explained later, there is another custom by which children of over seven or eight are adopted by a married couple belonging to a local group other than that of the parents, and live with them till they come of age. The parents of the child are still alive and they visit him or her at frequent intervals. No bar to marriage is set up by this kind of adoption. An adopted son may marry the daughter of his foster-parents. Indeed when children are betrothed it is the rule for the girl to be adopted by the boy's parents, at any rate for a time. On the other hand it is quite possible that a child adopted when of tender years (as an orphan) would not be permitted to marry a child of his or her foster-parents. I was unable to satisfy myself on this point.

There seems to be a prejudice against a woman marrying a man younger than herself. Some of the women with whom I talked expressed strong contempt at the idea of marrying a man younger than themselves. Unfortunately, I neglected

[1] I collected a number of genealogies from the natives, but unfortunately my own inexperience in the use of the genealogical method, and my consequent inability to surmount the difficulties with which I met, made this branch of my investigations a failure.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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parents, having a place in the family hut, and a share of the family meal. The children are treated with extreme kindness, and are never punished, and hardly ever scolded. Should the parents die the children are adopted by friends or relatives, and such adopted children are treated by the foster-parents in exactly the same way as their own children.

At the age of ten, or a little before, a change is often brought about in the life of a child, owing to the custom of adoption. Mr Man writes of this custom as follows:

"It is said to be of rare occurrence to find any child above six or seven years of age residing with its parents, and this because it is considered a compliment and also a mark of friendship for a married man, after paying a visit, to ask his hosts to allow him to adopt one of their children. The request is usually complied with, and thenceforth the child's home is with his (or her) foster-father: though the parents in their turn adopt the children of other friends, they nevertheless pay continual visits to their own child, and occasionally ask permission (!) to take him (or her) away with them for a few days. A man is entirely at liberty to please himself in the number of children he adopts, but he must treat them with kindness and consideration, and in every respect as his own sons and daughters, and they, on their part, render him filial affection and obedience. It not unfrequently happens that in course of time permission to adopt a foster-child is sought by a friend of the *soi-disant* father, and is at once granted (unless any exceptional circumstance should render it personally inconvenient), without even the formality of a reference to the actual parents, who are merely informed of the change, in order that they may be enabled to pay their periodical visits[1]."

The above passage is quoted because Mr Man had better opportunities of observation in this matter than myself. At the present day there are not many children in the Andamans, and this is an obstacle in the way of this custom of adoption. From my own observation, however, I should put the age at which it is customary for children to be adopted at higher than six or seven. I found children of about seven or eight still

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 125.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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597 living with their own parents. The usual age of adoption seemed to me to be from nine or ten years upwards.

A man and his wife adopt in this way children belonging to a local group other than their own. The adopted child lives with his or her foster-parents, having a place in their hut and a share of their meals. From about the age of ten children of both sexes begin to be of service to their parents or foster-parents in many ways. The foster-parents treat their adopted children in exactly the same way that they would treat their own children, and the children on the other hand show the same regard and affection to their foster-parents that they do to their own parents, and assist them in every way that they can. Their own parents come to visit them at regular intervals.

881 882 The period of childhood is brought to an end at about the age of puberty by certain ceremonies to be described in the next chapter. After the beginning of these ceremonies a boy ceases to live in the hut of his parents or his foster-parents, and must live with the young unmarried men and widowers in what has been called the bachelors' hut. From this time until he marries, his services are constantly required by his parents or by his foster-parents, and he is expected to obey them and help them in any way he can, It is only after his marriage that he becomes relatively independent and free to please himself in his own actions, and even then he is required to provide his parents or his foster-parents with food, and to serve them in any way they may need.

A girl, during the period between the beginning of the initiation ceremonies and her marriage, continues, at any rate, in some cases, and in these days, to live with her parents or with foster-parents. Mr Man states that the unmarried women and girls occupy a spinsters' hut similar to the bachelors' hut. It is possible that this was the former custom. I found instances of an unmarried girl occupying a place in the hut of a married couple who made use of her services and controlled her conduct, regarding her in the light of a foster-daughter. On one occasion I found two unmarried girls occupying a separate hut adjoining that of a married couple, who looked after the girls who occupied it.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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brother or to his mother's brother which he does not also owe, in perhaps a less degree, to other men of the same age, and there is no term by which he can distinguish his father's brother from those others.

If this account of the system of relationship be accurate it will be seen that the Andamanese society contrasts very strongly, in this matter, with other primitive societies[1].

It remains for us only to examine the social relations between the different local groups. Two neighbouring groups, whether of the same tribe or of different tribes, might be either friendly towards one another or unfriendly. Friendly relations were kept alive by several of the customs of the Andamanese, by the intermarriage of members of different groups, by the adoption of children from one group to another, and by the fact that a man of one group might take up his residence more or less permanently with another (particularly when he married a woman of that group, or was adopted when a boy by one of the men belonging to it). All these customs served to bind some persons in the one group to persons in the other, and thus prevent the two groups from becoming entirely unfriendly to one another.

When two neighbouring local groups were friendly to one another communication between them was kept up by visitors from one group to another, and by occasional meetings of the whole of the two groups.

Either a single person or a family might at any time pay a visit to another camp, staying a few days or weeks or even longer. A man would, however, only go visiting when he was sure of a welcome. Such visits were most frequent in the fine months of the year (December to May). As a husband and wife in many instances belonged to different local groups they

[1] It would not be safe, however, to base any arguments of importance to sociology on the above description of the Andamanese system of relationship alone. Although I tried to learn all that I could on the subject, it is quite certain that I did not learn all that was to be learnt, and it is possible that further enquiry might have shown that I was mistaken in some of my observations. The difficulty of being really sure on these matters is due (1) to the fact that the breaking-up of the old local organisation has produced many changes in their customs, and (2) to the difficulty of questioning the natives on matters connected with relationships when they have no words in their language to denote any but the simplest relationships.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

that the young are early instructed in the duties of hospitality, while the aged, the suffering, and the helpless are objects of special attention; that their moral code is not confined within these limits will be seen as I proceed.

4. The curious, but by no means uncommon,[1] savage custom of adoption prevails among them, from which, however, it must not be inferred that love of offspring is a characteristic in which they are at all deficient, for this is far from being the case.

5. It is said to be of rare occurrence to find any child above six or seven years of age residing with its parents, and this because it is considered a compliment and also a mark of friendship[2] for a married man, after paying a visit, to ask his hosts to allow him to adopt one of their children. The request is usually complied with, and thenceforth the child's home is with his (or her) foster-father (*mai-ōt-châtnga-*): though the parents in their turn adopt the children of other friends, they nevertheless pay continual visits to their own child, and occasionally ask permission (!) to take him (or her) away with them for a few days.

6. A man is entirely at liberty to please himself in the number of children he adopts, but he must treat them with kindness and consideration, and in every respect as his own sons and daughters, and they, on their part, render him filial affection and obedience.

7. It not unfrequently happens that in course of time permission to adopt a foster-child is sought by a friend of the *soi-disant* father, and is at once granted (unless any exceptional circumstance should render it personally inconvenient), without even the formality of a reference to the actual parents, who are merely informed of the change in order that they may be enabled to pay their periodical visits.

8. Foster-parents constantly manifest much opposition to any desire they may observe on the part of the lads they have brought up, to make a home for themselves, for the selfish reason that they are useful in a variety of ways, above all, when they have acquired skill in hunting, turtling, &c.; over the maidens little or no restraint is imposed, as their marriage entails but a trifling loss in a material sense on those who have reared them.

9. Human nature, however, is the same all the world over, and boys will be boys even in the Andaman jungles, so it is not surprising that, in spite of all the precautions taken by their

[1] *Vide* Lubbock, "On the Origin of Civilization," &c., p. 96.

[2] Whether this be the true explanation of its object and origin or not, there can be little doubt that it has the effect of greatly extending the intercourse between the members of the various encampments.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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597 seniors, a good deal of flirtation, and often something more, is carried on by the young people without arousing any suspicions as to their sentiments for one another, until the affair has become too serious to be broken off, and has to end, sooner or later, in their marriage and start in life on their own account. In some cases, when the guardians have reason to believe that a lad has, notwithstanding his assurances to the contrary, a *sub silentio* attachment, they adopt the following method for testing the truth of his asseveration; on a given day it is arranged by the friends of the suspected couple that they shall (without the knowledge of either) be painted respectively with the red oxide of iron unguent, *kòi·ob-*, and the white clay *tá·la-ōg-*, for, as they would not meet till night-fall, the risk of their discovering the trap laid for them is reduced to a minimum, while a glance on the following morning would suffice to betray them if guilty, and the guardians' object would be attained, for, from shame at his secret being known, and his falsehood exposed, the youth feels in honour bound to break off his connection with the girl, at least for some time.

Relationships.—1. In all the relations of life the question of propinquity is, in their eyes, of paramount importance, and marriage is only permissible between those who are known to be not even distantly connected, except by wedlock, with each other; so inexorable, indeed, is this rule, that it extends, and applies equally, to such as are related merely by the custom of adoption to which I have just referred.

2. A first cousin, actual or by adoption, is regarded as a half-brother or half-sister, as the case may be, and nephews and nieces almost as sons and daughters, while the terms used to denote a grandfather, grandmother, grandson, and grand-daughter are equally applied to indicate respectively a grand-uncle, grand-aunt, grand-nephew, and grand-niece.

3. Parents, when addressing, or referring to their children and not using their names, employ distinct terms, the father calling his son *dar ō·dire*, *i.e.*, he that has been begotten by me, and his daughter *dar ō·dire-pail-*; while the mother makes use of the word *dab ē·tire*, *i.e.*, he whom I have borne, for the former, and *dab ē·tire-pail-* for the latter; similarly, friends in speaking of children to their parents say respectively, *ngar ō·dire*, or *ngab ē·tire* (your son), *ngar ō·dire-pail-*, or *ngab ē·tire-pail-* (your daughter).[1]

4. Uncles and aunts on the father's are not distinguished from those on the mother's side; relationships are traced in both lines, and the system with reference to either sex is identical.

[1] Foster-parents employ the terms *dōt chá·tnga-* and *dōt chá·tnga-pail-* in referring to their adopted son and daughter respectively.

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[501] (11) *Canoes.*—Bojigngiji and Yerewa, same pattern canoe; Ónge-Jarawa pattern different from above. Both out-rigged, Bojigngiji has in addition a large dug-out without outrigger.

[342] (12) *Huts.*—Bojigngijis and Yerewas have temporary huts. Ónge-Jarawas have large permanent communal dwellings.

[535] (13) *Dancing.*—Bojigngijis and Yerawas, sounding board and song and clapping in unison. Ónge-Jarawa, standing in a ring and alternately bending and straightening the knees: also on occasion kicking the buttocks with the flat of the foot.

[357] (14) *Beds.*—Jarawas sleep on the wood ashes of the fires. Ónges on raised bamboo platforms. Other tribes on leaves and in sand-holes.

[562 251] (15) *Food.*—The staple food of the Ónges is the mangrove fruit, boiled, and they preserve small fish dried after cooking. None of the other tribes do this.

The Long-shore and Jungle Andamanese.—The Andamanese are by themselves again further divided into the Aryoto or long-shore men, and the Eremtaga or jungle-dwellers; the habits and capacities of these two differ, owing to surroundings, irrespective of tribe. Some tribes as the Tabo, Juwai, Kol, and the South Andaman Jarawas, are entirely Eremtaga, while the Balawa, the Chariar, and the Jarawas of the North Sentinel are entirely Aryoto. The Aryoto holds himself to be better than the Eremtaga, but beyond this there seem to be no exclusive distinctions between them and an Aryoto will marry or adopt an Eremtaga.

With the minuteness in matters concerning their surroundings that is characteristic of all entirely uneducated people, the Andamanese recognise a third division of themselves by habits into Adajig or creek-dwellers, *i.e.*, those who live on the shores of the many inlets of the sea on the coasts of the Islands. The habits of the Adajig, however, are practically those of the Aryoto.

Distinctions by habits are quickly lost by the Andamanese. The Jarawas have now no canoes in the South Andaman and are quite incapable of constructing or using them, though all Ónges have them and so have the Jarawas on the North Sentinel. So also had the Jarawas that Colebrooke met a century ago. And this year (1902) it was ascertained that the young men brought up at the Duratang (Kyd Island) Home and occupied chiefly in market gardening could neither steer nor paddle a canoe, nor take up tracks in the jungles. In one generation, though there was no restriction in communication with their people, they had lost both sea and forest craft.

Former Isolation of the Tribes.—Before the arrival of the English the tribes, excepting actual neighbours, may be said to have had no general intercourse with each other, and excepting some individuals were entirely unable to converse together, though it can be conclusively shown that all the existing languages are directly descended from one parent tongue. Even Septs had but little mutual intercourse and considerable differences in details of dialect and, as has occurred in other island abodes of savages, there must have been a change of dialect or language along about every 20 miles of the coast. The tribes were in fact brought together and made definitely acquainted with each other's separate existence and peculiarities by the influence and exertions of Mr. Man between 1875 and 1880.

609 **Sympathies and Antipathies.**—The tribal feeling is expressed as follows: friendly within the tribe, courteous to other Andamanese if known, hostile to every stranger, Andamanese or other. The sympathy and antipathy exhibited are strictly natural, *i.e.*, savage, and are governed by descent. The feeling of friendliness lies in an ever-decreasing zone from the family outwards towards sept, tribe, group: hostility to all others. Even septs will fight each other and Aryoto and Eremtaga do not mix much. But there is no "caste" feeling, and tribes will, in circumstances favouring the actions (*e.g.*, living on the tribal borders), intermarry and adopt each other's children. Within the tribe there is so general a custom of adoption that children above six or seven rarely live with their own parents. It is an act of friendliness to give up or adopt a child and the custom has had the effect of making the various septs of a tribe hang together much better than would otherwise have been possible.

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6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

torches for hunting by night. There were pigs everywhere. In half an hour we often got six or more of them. At Chemalé, far from the coast, we had eleven in a few minutes for distribution to everybody, including roaming Onge. Pigeons and ducks also were often plentiful. The simple pleasures of hunting incited everyone to a spontaneous daily struggle through the dense forest; and so, every month, I managed to carry out many times the work I could have done had I not kept all the men glad to follow me. On seven different occasions I spent 162 days in Little Andaman, out of a total of 634 days altogether in the Andamanese Archipelago – all of them given up to Onge research. These trips are recorded in Port Blair Government offices. A few details on the subject are published in the "Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology", Government of India, starting in Vol. II, No. 1, 1953 (issued in 1956) and extended to other issues. Such papers were hurriedly prepared by me while I was halting in Calcutta on my way from the Andamans to Europe. Press proofs could never be submitted to me; there are, consequently, many misprints, particularly in the figures relating to my Onge Census. The misprints are so obvious that they could only influence a most biased critic; to be discussed in future papers and while my Onge book is in preparation. In Port Blair (South Andaman) I started an Onge Museum with material collected by me. I had the honour of inaugurating it on 6 July, 1953 in the presence of the Chief Commissioner for Andamans and Nicobars, Mr. A. K. Ghosh, one of the kindest and most intelligent Indian gentlemen that it was my pleasure to meet in Asia. On 9 March, 1954 Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD, President of the Republic of India, also visited the Museum. On that occasion I introduced to him 30 of my Onge friends (wives, husbands and children) in their most natural attire. The President questioned me at length on Onge anthropology and ethnology with the pertinence of a specialist.

While in Little Andaman I tried to study all possible aspects of Onge life. I also tried to count the natives: a very difficult task for they are a nomadic people, ready to vanish into the jungle at any moment. Often I was surrounded by them without seeing a single one. In the darkness of their jungle, the small, black, naked Onge easily disappear. They see us but we do not see them. They can only be counted in their sleeping quarters in communal huts; even so, results are misleading. I found a number of communal huts in the interior regions of Little Andaman, whereas previously they were said to exist only on the coast. The larger, more solidly built huts are in the forest. With the help of my Indian assistants I obtained plans and photographs of all the huts that I saw. Unfortunately the number of Onge communal huts is rapidly diminishing – a very significant fact. Many are in ruins, many more completely destroyed. Only kitchen-middens and occasional clusters of planted bamboo indicate their former location. Through an interpreter, and with two Onge speaking a little Hindi, I was able to gather information on these and other matters. Direct observation, however, proved the best way of gaining knowledge. In some places there was nothing to help me, and I was compelled to guess about communal huts whose inmates chose to hide in the jungle. Of the many personal names that I collected I must say that they are reliable only for a short period: the Onge like to change their names from time to time. All this, in addition to the Onge's nomadic way of life, causes great confusion and makes a proper Census almost impossible. Frequent changing of names also hinders the establishment of genealogies. Furthermore, the Onge custom of adopting children shifts many of them from one family to another, and adoptive parents invariably claim them as their own offspring. The parents themselves, who are ignorant of numbers, not infrequently forget how many children they have, who these children are and where they are located. It was almost useless to follow previous information concerning communal huts; and so I decided to consider mainly the situation existing at the time of my visits. The result of my Census may be imperfect, but before criticizing it it would be advisable to know the conditions that prevail in anthropological work among the Onge. Something more than merely counting people, anyhow, was achieved by me in Little Andaman.

In this short paper I am pleased to present a peculiar aspect of Onge life, an aspect that these innocent and once hostile people did not attempt to hide from me, though they also told me nothing about it. Only direct observation could help, and it involved pro-

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

757 started slapping his hands on Toncootēi's and exposing them intermittently to
372 the fire. All this lasted over a quarter of an hour. The patient was then made
123 to lie prone, with his legs spread out, to receive a foot massage as described above, for another quarter of an hour. Torso, feet and hands were worked over, with short pauses for artificial respiration by means of compression. Subsequently his back, and particularly the sacral region, was vigorously rubbed by willing hands and feet. Three men performed this operation. Toncootēi was finally allowed to rest, between two fires kept burning all night. Sunrise found him alive, and the fever had abated, due, I think, to a good European laxative that I had persuaded him to take.

164 In March 1952, I witnessed a sad episode, followed by the death of
123 the patient, near my Labanare camp. A young mother was suffering from
[862] breast rhagades. Her baby was less than a month old, and she was also suckling
[597] another child, almost two years old, who had sharp teeth. It is a frequent kindly habit of the Onge to adopt babies; and it is customary to breast-feed them up to the age of four. Some interesting consequences arise out of this habit, but I shall not analyze them here. A minor detail: since they are allowed to suckle when they wish and are weaned so late, Onge children do not indulge in thumb sucking. Considerable reactions are spontaneously established between the two terminal parts of the digestive tube – oral and anal, as though in physiological conflict. Once more I affirm that the evidence of Onge sexual [864] behaviour positively denies Freudian theories with regard to the sexual life of children. Furthermore, young anthropoids and primitive people behave identically in this respect.

164 The adopted baby gave the young mother nipple wounds that became
123 infected and suppurated. For lack of proper care and in unhygienic surround-
752 ings, the infection spread to the rest of her body. I found her suffering terribly from pain in the breast, muscular spasm and high fever. The Onge had applied their usual external remedies to her body, from head to foot. Very tight bandages of ficus bark, renewed three times a day, were wrapped arounds legs, arms, trunk and abdomen. Bright red ochre – rare in Little Andaman and considered more effective because of its brilliant colour – was painted onto the afflicted breast. The poor young woman looked at me hopefully. I suggested her immediate removal to Port Blair Hospital, and sent radio messages from my camp to the Chief Commissioner, Mr. A. K. GHOSH. He responded generously by ordering a ship to call for the patient, but the journey was useless because her relations were opposed to displacing her. In March 1952 my friendship with the Onge was only starting; this will explain their refusal to follow my advice. Without proper care, in a place like Little Andaman, the patient died four days after my arrival at the camp.

756 Prescription of medicines and treatments such as those described above
[759] is not determined by specialists. Everybody submits to treatment, with general approval, convinced of its effectiveness. Witch doctors do not exist and perhaps never existed in the Andamans. Nothing, then, is known by the
755 Onge of the dances and exhibitions, commonly executed elsewhere for curative
757 purposes, that influence the patient on a psychobiological basis. As they have

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges

the finger-tips and almost pink, with pale chocolate moons and yellowish-brown palms and soles. In the adults the nails and soles of the feet remain pale, the palms being a little darker. The head, and the visible buccal and nasal epithelia, were almost black, and the gums were pink, as was the inside of the lips, with dark petechiae, in adults very noticeable, at the base of the teeth and over the tongue and palate. The cheeks, however, were a reddish-brown, although the whole skin was already showing signs of darkening after twelve hours. Nasal cartilage was minimal, but that of the ears well-developed. The darkest area of skin were the forehead, eye sockets, lids, nipples and genitalia.

In general, therefore, the infant's skin was very slightly lighter than that of the adults, though before I could be sure of this I had to wash off the thick layer of ochre which is smeared over the unwashed infants immediately after birth. As the infants are extremely carefully protected from the sun by 'umbrella' hats made of lobed palm leaves, the darkening, which is complete by the end of the first year, is clearly biological and is not effected by tanning. As, however, the Onges interchange or 'adopt' children freely, it was impossible to carry out any proper colorimetric observations.

I saw no albinos in the Onges, usually fairly common in dark-skinned peoples. I saw several in Africa, with apparently normal parents. Some African peoples destroy albinos at birth as they do those with deformities, and the Andamanese may do the same, as I saw little congenital deformity (see, however, p. 46). Fear of being held responsible for disasters which befall the group carries great weight, and it is possible that the two cases of abnormality which I did see did not manifest symptoms at birth. Twins, however, are clearly (and gladly) accepted, so eager are the Onges to have children.

It was already clear in the infant that it would have the somatic characteristics common to all Negritos as regards the proportions of the body, the form and dimensions of the head, absence of prognathism, comparatively fine lips, nose and ears, black skin, and woolly hair, and would be well below 1·5 metres in height when fully grown. Above all, the Andamanese have a large forehead, very wide-angled jaw and large mouths, with the upper lips not invariably full, as in Negroes. Many Onges, in fact, have fine features,

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

842 163 enjoy the active marital relationships necessary, according to their husbands, to encourage the entry of the benevolent spirits which bring motherhood. The late onset of fertility in all Andamanese 842 163 165 women and perhaps in men as well[1] probably depends on mechanisms which have been operating for a very long time, affecting the sex ratio at birth, and preferential infant mortality in one sex. [123] [124] By a combination of observation and deduction I was able to be reasonably certain that among the Onges at least more males are born than females. The disparity is reduced, though not eliminated, by a higher mortality rate in young males. Males thus remain in excess, making it difficult for some, possibly fertile, to find wives.

848 143 161 There are certain peoples – notably the Pitcairn Islanders – who have arisen by repeated inbreeding for hundreds of years from a very few individuals. It is clear from this example that genetic isolation and inbreeding cannot of themselves cause numerical, physical or mental decline of a population. The problem merits further investigation. Civilization has perhaps accused herself unjustly of causing the decline of primitive races, whereas she has in fact only hastened the disappearance of groups already heading for demographic decadence as the result of physiological factors which lie within the group itself, and which are consequently difficult to counteract. The intrinsic damage done by civilization as such has, in my opinion, been considerably exaggerated in some quarters.

855 597 Possibly because of the low birth rate the maternal instinct is very highly developed in the women of the Andamans, even to the point of 'adopting' children temporarily. These children are always given lavish affection, and are kept sometimes for years, or even permanently if the parents do not ask for them back. Given the language barrier, this custom makes census-taking difficult as childless couples happily declare adopted children as their own. Nabimbòi, with no children of her own, always had children with her, and it was only the fact that they differed from year to year that led me to suspect what was happening! One wonders whether the custom was not already common before outsiders first came to the Andamans, owing to the existence of a high incidence of sterility long before the arrival of civilization.

[1] There is some evidence of infertility in the men, but it is clear that this is of relatively minor importance.